FIG. 1 120 107 104 ,111 PUMP FOR SAMPLE PUMP FOR WASHING PUMP FOR REAGENT 103 COMPUTER /115 108 116 A/D CONVERTER 114 118 119 117. 106 INTERFACE 112 101 **PRINTER** 118 **CRT** [\]105 122 \ 150 125 121 102 151 **MEMORY KEYBOARD**

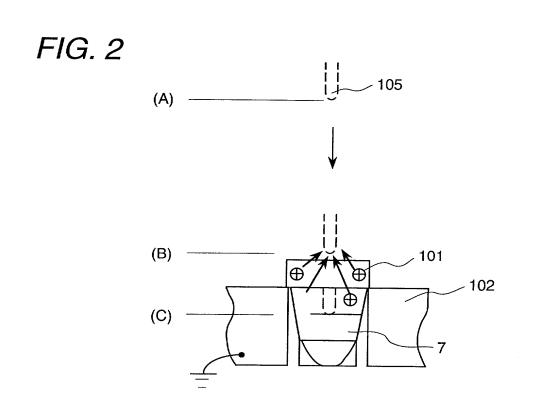
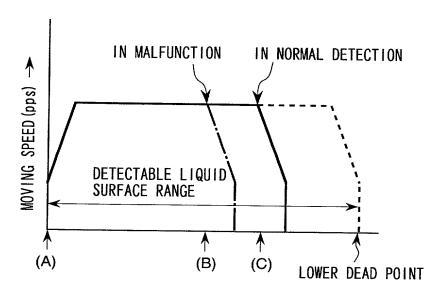


FIG. 3



PRIOR ART

FIG. 4

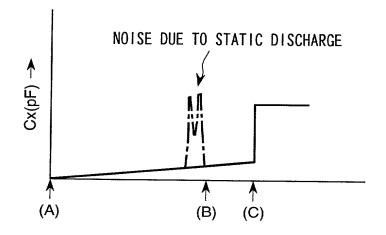


FIG. 5

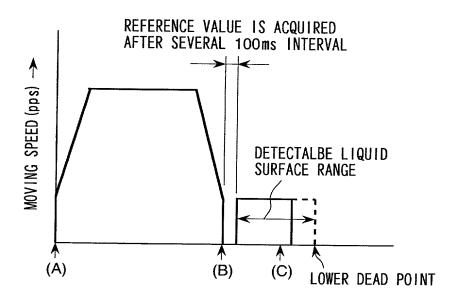


FIG. 6

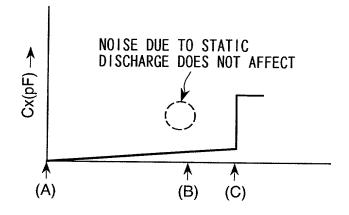


FIG. 7

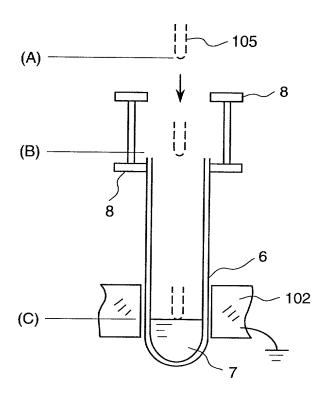


FIG. 8

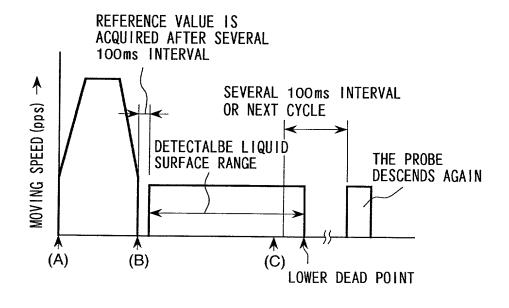


FIG. 9

AFTER THE PROBE CEASES TO DESCEND, THE CAPACITANCE IS MONITORED FOR A SPECIFIED LENGTH OF TIME. THE PROBE DESCENDS AGAIN IF THE CAPACITANCE DETECTED HAS DECREASED.

